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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/780,512	02/17/2004	Tai-Chun Huang	TS03-461	1383
42717	7590	10/28/2005	EXAMINER	
HAYNES AND BOONE, LLP 901 MAIN STREET, SUITE 3100 DALLAS, TX 75202			CHU, CHRIS C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2815	

DATE MAILED: 10/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Advisory Action  
Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief**

Application No.

10/780,512

Applicant(s)

HUANG ET AL.

Examiner

Chris C. Chu

Art Unit

2815

**--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

THE REPLY FILED 11 October 2005 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. ☒ The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to or on the same day as filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

- a) ☐ The period for reply expires \_\_\_\_\_ months from the mailing date of the final rejection.  
b) ☒ The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**NOTICE OF APPEAL**

2. ☐ The Notice of Appeal was filed on \_\_\_\_\_. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

**AMENDMENTS**

3. ☐ The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because  
(a) ☐ They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);  
(b) ☐ They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);  
(c) ☐ They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or  
(d) ☐ They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: \_\_\_\_\_. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

4. ☐ The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).  
5. ☐ Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): \_\_\_\_\_.  
6. ☐ Newly proposed or amended claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).  
7. ☒ For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) ☐ will not be entered, or b) ☐ will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:

Claim(s) allowed: \_\_\_\_\_.

Claim(s) objected to: \_\_\_\_\_.

Claim(s) rejected: 1 - 3, 5 - 8, 16 - 23 and 25.

Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: 4, 9 - 15 and 24.

**AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE**

8. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).  
9. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing of a good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).  
10. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER**

11. ☒ The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because:  
See Continuation Sheet.  
12. ☐ Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08 or PTO-1449) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_  
13. ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

*Tom Thomas*  
TOM THOMAS  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Continuation of 11. does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because:

Applicant argues that claims 4 and 24 should be rejoined. This argument is not persuasive because the limitation in claims 4 and 24 recite that the "whole" of said corner has a width wider than said second width which is clearly not read on the elected species of Figure 8B. For example, at the starting point for the corner, right after the second width indicated by "A" in Fig. 8A has same width as the second width. Thus, the limitations in claims 4 and 24 are not directed to the subject matter in the elected species of Fig. 8B (see the previous Office actions mailed on September 19, 2005 and April 6, 2005 for more details). Therefore, the withdrawn of the claims 4 and 24 are deemed proper.

Applicant argues that the term "about" should not be rejected under 35 USC § 112. This argument is not persuasive because the courts have held that the term "about" is indefinite where there was close prior art and there was nothing in the specification, prosecution history, or the prior art to provide any indication as to what range of specific activity is covered by the term "about." *Amgen, Inc. v. Chugai Pharmaceutical Co.*, 927 F.2d 1200, 18 USPQ2d 1016 (Fed. Cir. 1991); and, MPEP § 2173.05(b). In this case, there is close prior art, and applicant never pointed to any specific location in the specification or the prosecution history that provides any indication as to what range of specific activity is covered by the terms "about". Therefore, the rejection is maintained.

Applicant argues that Tsuji's element 4 is not a seal ring. This argument is not persuasive because the term "seal ring" as defined in the page 3, lines 4 – 5 of the specification is nothing more than a continuous metal layer on a substrate along a perimeter of a die wherein the continuous metal line encloses device structures. Tsuji's element 4 is a continuous metal layer (4; an aluminum layer) on a substrate (1) along a perimeter of a die (2) wherein the continuous metal line (4) encloses device structures (see the Figure, column 1, lines 42 – 44 and column 2, lines 52 – 58 of Tsuji). Since Tsuji's element (4) has same structural limitations and functions as the claimed structure as set forth in claim 16, a reasonable interpretation of the term "seal ring" includes the structure taught by Tsuji.

The arguments presented in pages 8 and 9 of the Response of Final Office action have been carefully reviewed but fail to be persuasive because claim 1 do not specifically claim that the via is an individual or separate opening which do not have a continuous ring form. A reasonable interpretation of the term "via" includes the structure taught by Ma.

For the above reasons, the rejection is maintained.